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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7922

S E C R E T SAIGON 11937

EXDIS
SUBJ: KY-KHIEM LETTER ON ELECTIONS

REF: A. SAIGON 11670 B. SAIGON 11878 (PARA 1.C)

1. ON JULY 26 VICE PRESIDENT KY SENT THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER KHIEM:

2. QUOTE DEAR PRIME MINISTER, I RESPECTFULLY WOULD LIKE TO DRAW THE PRIME MINISTER'S ATTENTION TO THE DIFFICULTIES INITIATED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES CONCERNING THE ESTEEMED PROVINCIAL AND CITY COUNCILLORS WHEN THEY UTILIZE THEIR RIGHT TO INTRODUCE PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AS DEFINED BY LAW NO. 009/71, DATED 23 JUNE, 1971.

3. QTE THE ABUSE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY OF THE PROVINCIAL AND CITY MAYORS HAS OCCURRED WITHIN THE FORMS OUTLINED BELOW:

1/- PRETEXT OF BEING BUSY WITH OFFICIAL DUTIES.

FOR THE PAST 15 DAYS, THE SAIGON, CITY, AND TOWN MAYORS HAVE BEEN CONTINUOUSLY ABSENT FROM THEIR OFFICES DURING WORKING HOURS; SOME HAVE USED THE PRETEXT OF BEING OUT ON MILITARY OPERATIONS, SOME HAVE USED THE PRETEXT OF ATTENDING CONFERENCES. THIS PROBLEM HAS CAUSED MANY COUNCILLORS NOT TO BE ABLE TO EXECUTE THEIR AUTHORITY, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE HAD TO WAIT MANY DAYS AT THE PROVINCIAL CAPITALS.

THIS SITUATION HAS OCCURRED IN MANY PROVINCES SUCH AS PHUOC TUY, BIEN HOA, KHANH HOA, BINH DINH, ETC.

(1)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Spalin 057828 DATE 1/26/82
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☑ RELEASABLE☑
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

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2/. PRESSURE AND THREATS.

IN MANY LOCAL AREAS, THE CITY AND TOWN MAYORS HAVE NOT HESITATED TO USE DIRECT PRESSURE IN FORCING THE COUNCILLORS TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS IN SELECTING CANDIDATES TO BE INTRODUCED.

A TYPICAL EXAMPLY IS NHA TRANG. THE KHANH HOA CHIEF REFUSED TO VALIDATE A SIGNATURE OF A DIFFERENT COUNCILLOR BECAUSE (THIS COUNCILLOR) DID NOT INTRODUCE A SUBSTITUTE VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, A CONDITION NOT DEMANDED BY LAW.

A DIFFERENT EXAMPLE: 23 JULY 71, IN BIEN HOA: AFTER AN ABSENCE, THE PROVINCE CHIEF DID NOT VALIDATE THE SIGNATURE OF 5 COUNCILLORS WHO INTRODUCED THE SLATE OF NGUYEN CAO KY-TRUONG VINH LE AND DEMANDED THAT THEY (THE 5 COUNCILLORS) ATTEND A SUPPER TO FORCE THEM TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS.

4. STE THE SAIGON, CITY AND TOWN MAYORES HAVE NOT RESPONSIBLY AND PROPERLY EXECUTED THE VALIDATION OF SIGNATURES AS FIXED BY LAW NO. 009/71.

5. STE THE SAIGON, CITY AND TOWN MAYORS HAVE PLOTTED TO UTILIZE THE (GOVERNMENTAL) ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY TO BLOCK (THE NOMINATION) OF OPPOSITION CANDIDATES.

6. STE I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THE PRIME MINISTER TO RECONSIDER THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH OF US DURING THIS HISTORICAL ERA FULL OF INFINITE DIFFICULTIES. I BELIEVE THAT THE CONSCIENCE OF A GENERAL STAFF OFFICER OF THE ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, AS WELL AS THE CONSCIENCE OF A VIETNAMESE CITIZEN WILL NOT ALLOW THE PRIME MINISTER TO BE INDIFFERENT TO OR PARTICIPATE IN SUCH DISHONEST PLOTTING AS THIS.

7. STE BECAUSE THE PERIOD OF TIME SET BY LAW IS QUITE PRESSING, IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THE ABOVE SITUATION, I RESPECT THE PRIME MINISTER TO IMMEDIATELY ISSUE THE FOLLOWING ORDERS TO THE PROVINCIAL AND CITY MAYORS:

- FIRST: SET A DEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME TO VALIDATE THE SIGNATURES OF THE COUNCILLORS.

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- SECOND: END ALL DISHONEST ACTIONS WITH THE AIM OF CHANGING THE DECISIONS OF THE COUNCILLORS IN SELECTING CANDIDATES.

4. QTE I RESPECTFULLY RENDER GREETINGS TO THE PRIME MINISTER. UNQUOTE.

5. EVIDENCE OF KHIEM'S RESPONSE, THE TEXT OF WHICH WE HAVE NOT YET OBTAINED, IS CONTAINED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM WHICH APPEARED IN THE VIETNAM PRESS JULY 28:

QUOTE THE PRIME MIISTER TRAN THIEN KHIEM TUESDAY URGED THE SAIGON PREFECT, CITY MAYORS AND PROVINCE CHIEFS TO SPEED UP THE ENDORSEMENT OF INTRODUCTION SIGNATURES FOR CANDIDATES IN THE OCT. 3 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

QTE IN A MESSAGE SENT TO THE SAIGON PREFECT, CITY MAYORS AND PROVINCE CHIEFS, THE PRIME MINISTER NOTED THE FACT THAT SOME LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES HAVE DELAYED SUCH ENDORSEMENTS.

QTE TO PUT AN END TO THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS, THE PRIME MINISTER REQUESTED THE SAIGON PREFECT, CITY MAYORS AND PROVINCE CHIEFS TO STRICTLY ABODE BY THE LAW NO. 9-71 DATED JUNE 23, 1971 ON THE PROCEDURES OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, ESPECIALLY TO PROVIDE THE CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WITH THE ENDORSEMENT OF THEIR INTRODUCTION SIGNATURES ACCORDINGLY. UNQUOTE
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